

Chapter 2

Background of the Monument

Minidoka Internment National Monument is located in south central Idaho, approximately 15 miles northeast of Twin Falls. From 1942 to 1945, the site was a War Relocation Authority (WRA) facility, which incarcerated nearly 13,000 Nikkei (Japanese American citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese ancestry) from Washington, Oregon, California, and Alaska. Today, the 72.75-acre national monument is a small portion of the historic 33,000-acre center. The national monument site is within Idaho's second legislative district in Jerome County and is within a sparsely populated agricultural community. The authorized boundary of the national monument is defined by the North Side Canal to the south and private property to the north and west. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) retains the visitor services area parcel in the center of the national monument and the east end site parcel to the east of the national monument.

History of the Internment and Incarceration of Nikkei at Minidoka Relocation Center

Pre - World War II

The prelude to the incarceration began with Japanese immigration and settlement of the West Coast between 1880 and 1924. During the late 19th century, Japan underwent a severe and extensive economic and social revolution, in which farmers and peasants suffered from new national taxes and a dire economic situation. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 contributed to Japanese immigration as well, creating the perception that Japanese could fill a void in inexpensive farm labor. The first generation immigrants, known as Issei, came to the U.S. to work. Some hoped to make fortunes and return to Japan. In the U.S. labor jobs only provided living wages; however, most Issei recog-

nized that their jobs in farming, fishing, and timber offered more opportunities than in Japan. By the turn of the century there were 24,326 Issei in the U.S. with a male to female ratio of 33:1. Between 1901 and 1908, 127,000 Japanese came to the U.S., including wives, picture brides, and children who eventually evened out the gender and age gaps (Daniels 1962: 1, Appendix A). Nikkei communities developed rapidly, establishing churches, businesses, hotels, and schools in *nihonmachi*, or Japantowns, throughout the West Coast.

A number of debilitating laws, notably based on race, contributed to the marginal condition of Nikkei communities in the pre-war period. The Naturalization Acts of 1790 and 1922 prevented Japanese immigrants from being naturalized. Alien land laws, passed beginning in 1913, barred aliens ineligible for citizenship from owning and leasing land in Arizona, California, Oregon, and Washington. The Oriental Immigration Act of 1924 effectively stopped immigration from Asia until the

Students studying in the Minidoka Relocation Center high school. 11th grade students painted the mural depicting camp life. January 1944. National Archives.



Jimmy's Clothes Shop with owner Maasaki Usuda. Portland Oregon. 1940. Courtesy of May Hada and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.



Arima dairy farm, Christopher, Washington. 1919. Permission of the White River Valley Museum.



Instructors at the Portland Obukan. (Left to Right) Frank Tomori, Art Sasaki, Headmaster Bun-Uyemon, Senta Nii, Toru Kobayashi. ca. 1926. Courtesy of Jack Yoshihara and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.



Emily Inez Denny and Oyshu, Seattle. Circa 1890. Photographer: Faber. Permission of the Museum of History & Industry.

1960s. During this period, Issei contributed to establishing important infrastructure, industries and settling of the American West. (For an accurate summary of the legal discrimination against Japanese, see the United States Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (U.S. CWRIC), *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, with a new forward by Tetsuden Kashima 1997). As a result of these laws, the Nikkei majority was economically and socially marginalized within the mainstream of American society. Thus, in the urban and semi rural areas, Nikkei communities became tightly knit and self-reliant entities, where Nikkei lived or worked in and around the community neighborhoods. In rural areas, they attempted to establish Nikkei farming communities, where they often leased and bought land in the names of their American born children.

In the pre-war period, the tensions and differences between the Issei and their American-born descendants, called Nisei, became increasingly evident. The Nisei were American citizens, who were educated in American schools, spoke English, and were culturally more Americanized than their parents. However, Nisei were still marginalized based on their Nikkei ethnic identity.

By 1940, roughly two-thirds of ethnic Japanese were American-born citizens. In Hawaii, there were nearly 158,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, three-quarters of whom were born in Hawaii. In the continental United States, there were 126,947 people of Japanese ancestry. A total of 112,353 of them lived in the West Coast states, with the majority concentrated in California. Roughly 240 people of Japanese ancestry lived in the Territory of Alaska. Nikkei represented a very small minority in the U.S., making up less than one-tenth of a percent of the total population.

Anti-Japanese sentiments were apparent from the beginning of Japanese immigration. The prejudice was based on economic competition, overt racism, and fear resulting from the first victory of an Asian nation (Japan) over a western one (Russia) in 1905 (Burton 1997: 26). "Yellow journalism" sponsored and incited racism against Japanese in all major newspapers along the West Coast. Anti-Japanese organizations developed at the turn of the century and intensified up to the forced removal of Nikkei from the West Coast in 1942.



Japan Day celebration at the Shattuck School in Portland, Oregon featuring Nisei students with parents and teachers. ca. 1937. Courtesy of Lilly Irinaga and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

“Walking home from school, I savored the May trees and floral colors. Suddenly, two gangly teenagers blocked my path, demanding, ‘Are you a Jap?’ I stammered, ‘N-no...no, I-I’m not a Jap, I’m Japanese.’”

One boy stooped down to pick up something, I began to run. A stick struck my back. I ran faster. ‘You dirty yellow Jap, go back where you belong,’ the boys shouted. A stone brushed my hair, whizzed passed my left ear. Missiles kept coming until I was out of range, but I kept running and running until I turned right on Jefferson Street where I paused to peer over my right shoulder. With my heart pounding and beads of sweat rolling down my face, I stumbled into the lobby of my apartment building.”

-Sato Hashizume



Nikkei stores on Jackson street in Japantown, Seattle. Circa 1919. Photographer: Webster & Stevens. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.



Nikkei farmers donating food to the poor at Pike Place Market, Seattle. Circa 1922. Photographer: Webster & Stevens. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

“Kindly give some thought to ridding our beloved Country of these Japanese who hold no love or loyalty to our God, our ideals, or our traditions, or our Government-They should never have been allowed here.”-Letter to the President from a Seattle woman, January 24, 1942

Nikkei and World War II

Beginning in 1940, U.S. government listening posts were decrypting Japanese diplomatic code, in which Japanese were suggesting recruitment and collaboration with Japanese Americans living in the United States. (For more detailed accounts of this diplomatic code, called MAGIC, see: Herzig, John A. “Japanese Americans and MAGIC,” *Amerasia Journal* 11:2 (1984). Lowman, David D. *MAGIC: The untold story of U.S. Intelligence and the evacuation of Japanese residents from the West Coast during WW II*. Utah: Athena Press: 2001. Robinson, Greg. *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 2001.) In early December 1941, Washington sent a warning to the U.S. Army and Navy of a

The Japanese race is an enemy race and while many second and third generation Japanese born on the United States soil, possessed of United States citizenship, have become ‘Americanized,’ the racial strains are undiluted... It, therefore, follows that along the Pacific Coast over 112,000 potential enemies of Japanese extraction are at large today. -Lt. General John L. DeWitt, Commanding General of the Western Defense Command, 1942

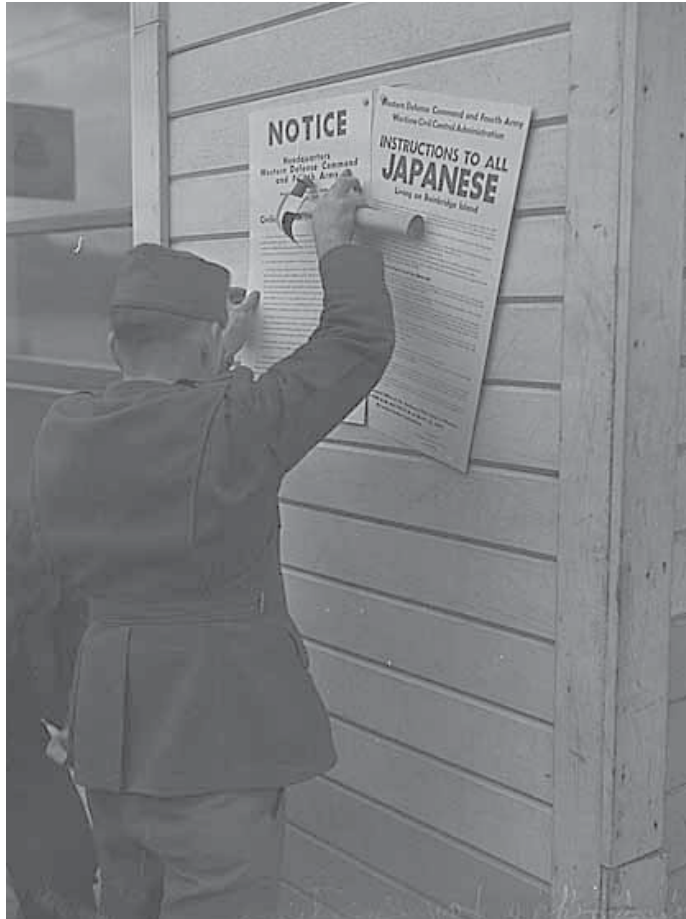


Damage at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum.

possible attack on Pearl Harbor, the Philippines, Thailand or the Malay Peninsula by Imperial Japan. Then on December 7, Japanese fighter planes attacked Pearl Harbor, resulting in 3,500 American casualties. The U.S. declared war with Japan the following day.

Beginning on December 7, the Justice Department began arresting 1,500 Issei listed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as potentially subversive and dangerous. These Issei were deemed “enemy aliens” by the government, as they were Japanese nationals living in the U.S., and the U.S. and Japan were at war. Most arrested Issei were businessmen and community leaders involved in Japanese organizations and religious groups. Additionally, the bank accounts of enemy aliens as well as all American branches of Japanese banks were summarily closed. Without leadership or financial assets, the Nikkei community was immediately impacted by Pearl Harbor.

Deep resentment, discrimination, bitterness, and fear of Japanese-born immigrants and their Japanese American descendants living along the West Coast began to surface within the government, media, and general public. The media often sensationalized rumors of possible Japanese attacks and spy rings and characterized all Nikkei as the enemy; these actions incited hysteria and paranoia within the general public. Caucasian farmers along the West Coast capitalized on the hysteria, saying they wanted the Japanese off the West Coast, thereby removing Nikkei agricultural competition.



"Soldier posting civilian exclusion order on Bainbridge Island." 1942. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

The anti-Japanese bandwagon was getting larger and stronger and pressuring the government to take action against Nikkei. One noteworthy exception was the *Bainbridge Island Review* in which the editor, Walter C. Woodward, continuously opposed the incarceration of Japanese Americans, particularly the Island's 227 Nikkei who were the first to be forcibly removed from their homes in March 1942 after Executive Order 9066.



Man stacking radios surrendered by Nikkei in Seattle. December 29, 1941. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

Meanwhile, within the government, there was mounting suspicion and fear of Nikkei espionage and an evident dilemma about how to separate loyals and disloyals. Reports of Nikkei subversive activities were also mounting, despite being unsubstantiated. Ultimately, "military necessity" was the government's justification for the restrictions, exclusion orders, and eventual internment and incarceration of Nikkei.

On February 19, 1942, Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Franklin Roosevelt, giving the War Department the authority to establish areas from which any and all persons could be excluded. General John L. Dewitt of the Western Defense Command began the implementation of Executive Order 9066, with the creation of Military Area No. 1 that encompassed the western half of Oregon, Washington, California, and the southern half of

"The Hearst newspapers are putting on a typical Hearst campaign for the removal and sequestration of all the Japanese along the Pacific Coast. This would be a cruel and unnecessary step. In some places in California, people are refusing to buy Japanese truck farm products. The president told about a movie actress who said to him that she was afraid that the Japanese would poison their vegetables. This, of course, is purely hysteria." - Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, February 1, 1942

*"Evacuation
As we boarded the bus
Bags on both sides (I had never
packed two bags before on a
vacation lasting forever)
The Seattle Times Photographer
said Smile!
So obediently I smiled
And the caption the next day
Read:
Note smiling faces
A lesson to Japan."
- Mitsuye Yamada*

Associated Sites



Legend

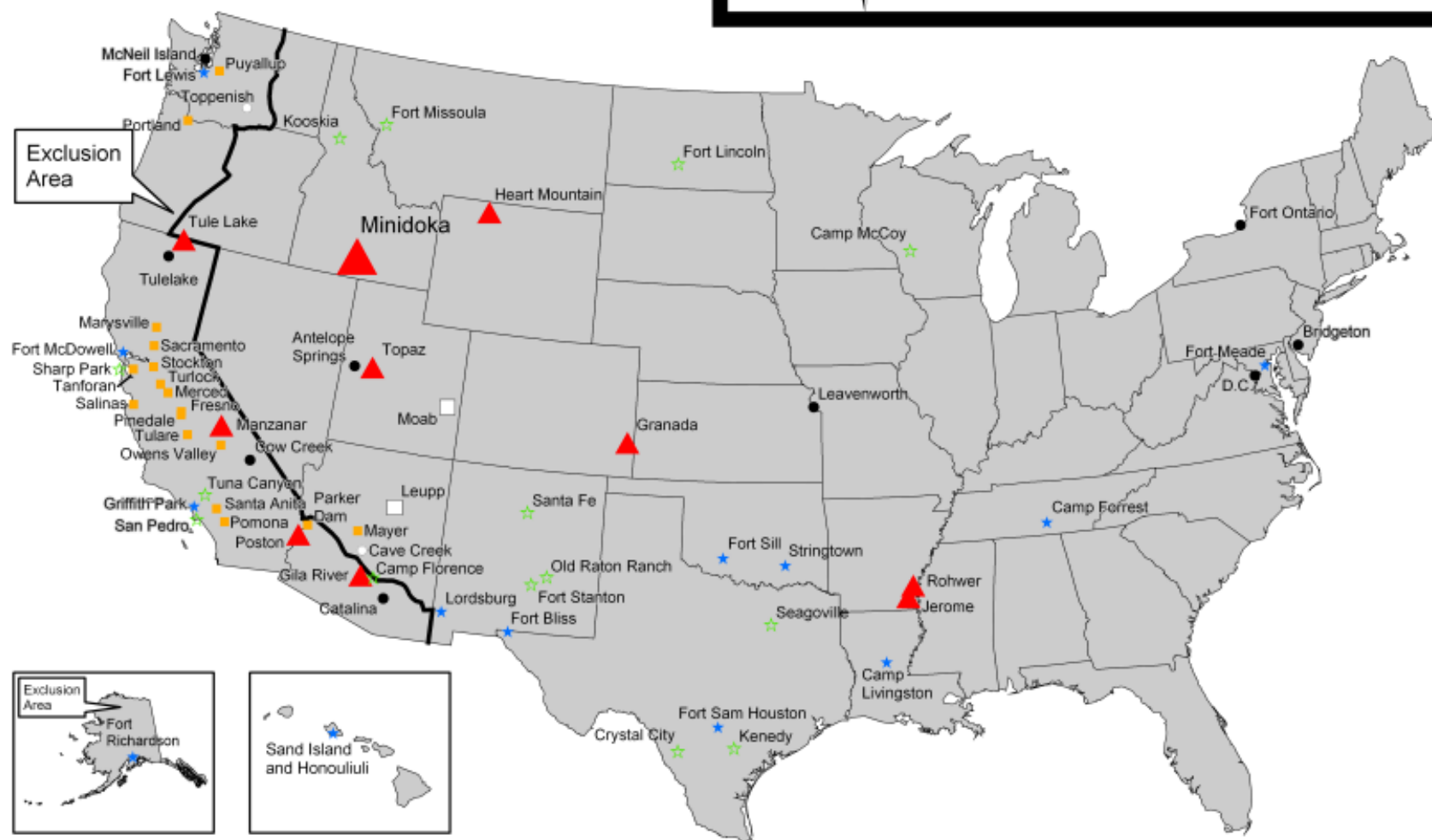
- ▲ WRA Relocation Center
- ☆ Justice Department
- ★ U.S. Army Center
- WRA Isolation Center
- Temporary WRA or other Facility
- WCCA Assembly Center
- Unused Facility

Data Sources:
State Boundaries: ESRI
Sites: NPS, ESRI



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Plot Date: August 5, 2004
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Map Prepared by: Pacific West Region - GIS Group



Sixth Avenue in Japantown, Seattle after mass removal. 1942. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

Arizona, and Military Area No. 2 that included the remainder of the entire state of California. Initially, voluntary resettlement to areas outside the exclusion zones was encouraged. Mandatory incarceration soon followed.

The Navy regarded Bainbridge Island as a highly sensitive area, as Fort Ward on Bainbridge Island, Washington, was a strategic military listening post monitoring communication in the Pacific. As a result, the first exclusion order, Civilian Exclusion Order 1, was issued for Bainbridge Island, giving 54 Nikkei families only six days to prepare for their departure. At the Eagledale ferry dock on Bainbridge Island, the Nikkei families were escorted by armed soldiers as they walked down Taylor Avenue and on to the ferry *Kehloken*. When the *Kehloken* docked in Seattle, the Nikkei were transferred to a train destined for southern Califor-

nia, while hundreds of onlookers waved goodbye and witnessed their departure. Their destination in southern California was Manzanar, the first center to house incarcerated Nikkei during World War II. Roughly a year later, most Bainbridge Island Nikkei requested and were permitted transfer from Manzanar to Minidoka.

The Bainbridge Islander's departure, on March 30, 1942, alarmed Nikkei communities along the West Coast and substantiated the rumor that they would be removed soon. In preparation for their forced departure, Nikkei closed up businesses, consolidated their homes, and secured their possessions. Merchandise and possessions were sold in haste, since their future was uncertain. As a result Nikkei experienced significant economic losses in the process. When they left for the temporary assembly centers, they were allowed to bring only what they could carry without knowing where they were going or for how long.

Under the direction of the army-controlled War-time Civilian Control Administration, all Nikkei living within the military areas were forcibly moved to 17 temporary camps, called assembly centers, situated primarily on fairgrounds between March and August. From northwestern Washington and Alaska, 7,682 Nikkei were sent to the Puyallup Assembly Center, coined "Camp Harmony" by army public relations officers. Camp Harmony was located at the Western Washington State Fairgrounds, where internees lived between April 28 and September 12, 1942. Among the Nikkei popu-



"Evacuation Sale" of store inventory in Seattle. Circa 1942. Permission of Museum of History & Industry. (Top)

Sadji Shiogi carrying a single bag, between two G-men in dark hats and overcoats. December 7th, 1942. Permission of the Oregon Historical Society. (Bottom)



The Bailey Gatzert School in Seattle lost 45 percent of its student body when Nikkei were removed to Minidoka and other WRA camps during World War II. Circa 1942. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

"Mrs. Nelson shook her head, saying, 'I don't understand why you are in here.' When we told her that we would soon be moved to Idaho, she began to weep. Through her tears, she asked, 'Why are they doing this to you? You are American citizens, born right here in Portland. It's wrong, all wrong. What is going to happen to you?'"

- Sato Hashizume

lation were native Alaska spouses and mixed native Alaska and Nikkei children. From northwest Oregon and central Washington, 4,290 Nikkei were sent to the Portland Assembly Center in the Pacific International Livestock Exposition Pavilion. Conditions in the temporary centers were later characterized as more severe than in the WRA centers. Internees noted the unsanitary conditions of living in hastily converted livestock stalls, where the smell of manure and horse flies was pervasive. The lack of privacy and communal living, as well as the security fences, watchtowers, and armed guards compounded the psychological trauma of the forced removal and incarceration.

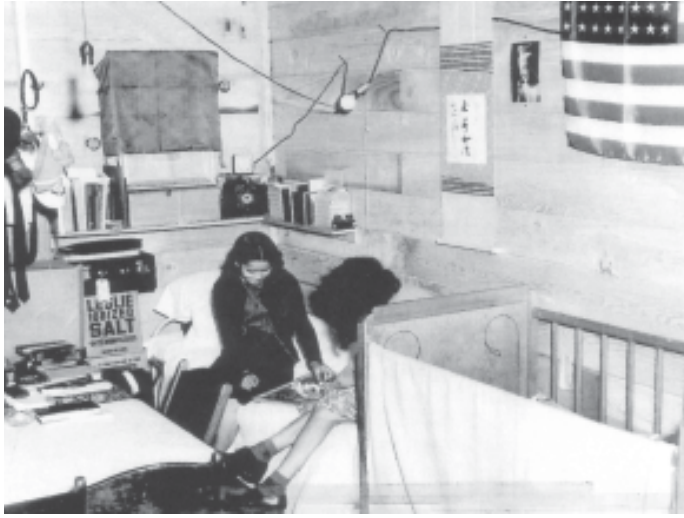
The move to Minidoka from the assembly centers began before the camp was completed. The first to move were those who agreed to work on completing construction and preparing the camp for the arrival of internees in the autumn of 1942. Between August and September, 7,150 Camp Harmony internees were placed on trains and sent to Minidoka. In September, internees from the Portland Assembly Center arrived at Minidoka, totaling 1,927 people. Minidoka housed residents from four states: Washington, Oregon, California, and Alaska. Washington state counties included: King, Pierce, and Kitsap. Oregon counties included: Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, Yamhill, Tillamook, Clatsop, and Columbia. When 1,500 people arrived from Tule Lake in 1943, their home of origins were other counties in Washington, Oregon, and California.



"Dressed in uniform marking service in the first World War, this veteran enters Santa Anita Park assembly center for persons of Japanese ancestry evacuated from the West Coast." Photographer: Clem Albers. April 5, 1942. National Archives.



Internees arriving at the Puyallup Assembly Center. 1942. Permission of the University of Washington.



Five person apartment of Reverend T. Terakawa (Buddhist priest), Hiroko Terakawa, daughter, and friend Lilian Hayashi at the Pacific International Livestock Expo Building in north Portland. May 31, 1942. Permission of Oregon Historical Society.



"Internees lined up in the rain at Camp Harmony, Puyallup." 1942. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

Between September 1942 and October 1945, the Minidoka WRA Center was in custody of 13,078 people and 12,758 were admitted to the Center (Final Accountability Roster of the Minidoka Relocation Center 1945). However, the peak population was 9,500 persons in 1942. There were 489 births and 193 deaths. Minidoka constituted the 7th largest city in Idaho while it was operational between 1942 and 1945.

1942-1945: Minidoka Relocation Center Construction and Establishment

While Nikkei were incarcerated at the assembly centers, the WRA was hastily making plans for the construction and operation of more permanent camps, which were intended to be self-sufficient when operational. On April 13, 1942, the WRA stated its site requirements: "1. All centers must be located on public land so that improvements at public expense become public, not private, assets. Any land required for this purpose will remain in public ownership. 2. Because of manpower needs in the armed services and because the minimum guard unit can guard 5,000 persons as easily as smaller groups, first attention will be given to sites adequate for large projects. 3. Each center must provide work opportunities throughout the year for the available workers to be located there. All centers must be located at a safe distance from strategic works" (War Relocation Authority quarterly and semiannual reports March 18-June 30, 1942).



Portland Assembly Center located at the Pacific International Livestock Exhibition building in north Portland. July 8, 1942. Permission of Oregon Historical Society.



A family arrives and prepares to enter the Portland Assembly Center with the assistance of soldiers. Pacific International Livestock Expo Building in north Portland. May 3, 1942. Permission of Oregon Historical Society.



Police at Portland Assembly Center. Circa 1942. National Archives

*Minidoka
Relocation Center
under construction.
Photograph by
Francis Stewart.
August 18, 1942.
Permission of the
Bancroft Library.*



Minidoka was one of the earliest selected sites. On April 22, 1942, negotiations between the Bureau of Reclamation and the WRA were initiated to discuss the siting of a camp at Minidoka. The site fulfilled all the WRA selection criteria: it was on a remote tract of public land; the railway line was located just 3 miles to the south; and electricity was accessible 6 miles to the south by the

Idaho Power Company. Water from the Milner-Gooding Canal could be used for irrigation once smaller canals were constructed and lands cleared. The North Side Canal water was concluded to be too costly, as it would require purchase of water rights from the North Side Canal Company and large scale pumping because it was lower than the site. Negotiations between the

WRA and BOR settled on the following agreements: 1) in exchange for occupation of the land, the WRA agreed to construct laterals and farm ditches and clear lands to raise food crops, 2) construction work would be performed under the supervision of the BOR, and 3) the land would be returned to the BOR after the war (BOR *Minidoka Annual Project History* 1942).

It was proposed that thousands of acres would be under cultivation by 1943 and would produce most of the food necessary for the incarcerated community. The Minidoka Relocation Project area was finally negotiated to include 34,063.35 acres and the central populated area encompassed 946.3 acres (BOR *Minidoka Annual Project History* 1942).

The WRA contracted the design and master planning of the camp to the architect-engineer firm of Glenn Stanton and Hollis Johnston, Architects of Portland, Oregon between May 20, 1942 and June 30, 1942 (with the last revision made on March 16, 1943) (WRA *Final Report of the Construction Division, Minidoka Relocation Center* 1946). The canals, basalt outcroppings, and uneven topography of the site led to the crescent shape design, spanning approximately 3 miles in length. Morrison-Knudson Company of Boise, Idaho, was awarded \$3,500,000 for construction of the camp and necessary roads. Work was to be completed between June 5 and December 31, 1942. A crew of approximately 3,000 local laborers were paid from \$72-\$300 a week, which was considered a very high wage at the time. The construction of the camp and associated infrastructure helped south-central

Idaho out of its financial depression (Arrington 1994, 88). By 1946, Minidoka had the highest per capita construction cost of all the of the WRA camps, totaling \$584 per internee.

The style and building construction techniques were based on a traditional military “Theater of Operations” design, intended for speedy construction and short duration. As a result, virtually all of the structures built to house the internees were simple timber frame buildings on concrete piers with tar paper walls (WRA *Final Reports, Minidoka Relocation Center* 1946). An oiled road from Perrine to the camp site was routed and built to avoid farmlands in the vicinity and became the only entrance to the camp (*North side News* June 4, 1942). A guard tower, military police building, and reception building were built at the entrance. The inner core area included the administrative area, military police buildings, hospital area, a sewage treatment plant, and warehouse area. Each area included a cluster of buildings surrounded by open space. Surrounding the inner core were the two residential areas divided into Area #1, which encompassed Blocks 1-20, and Area #2 for Blocks 21-44. Block numbers on the original master plan were changed after its construction and block numbers 9, 11, 18, 20, 25, 27, and 33 never existed. The camp was arranged by streets lettered A-H, and Avenues 1st-23rd. Plans for the lands to the north and east included a chicken and hog farm and agricultural fields. Four wells supplied water to two large water towers, which was then distributed to mess halls and the lavatory/laundry buildings in each block.



Minidoka Relocation Center under construction. Photograph by Francis Stewart. August 18, 1942. Permission of the Bancroft Library. (Top)

Baggage, belonging to internees who have just arrived from the assembly center at Puyallup, Washington, is sorted and trucked to barracks. Photograph by Francis Stewart. August 17, 1942. Permission of Bancroft Library. (Bottom)



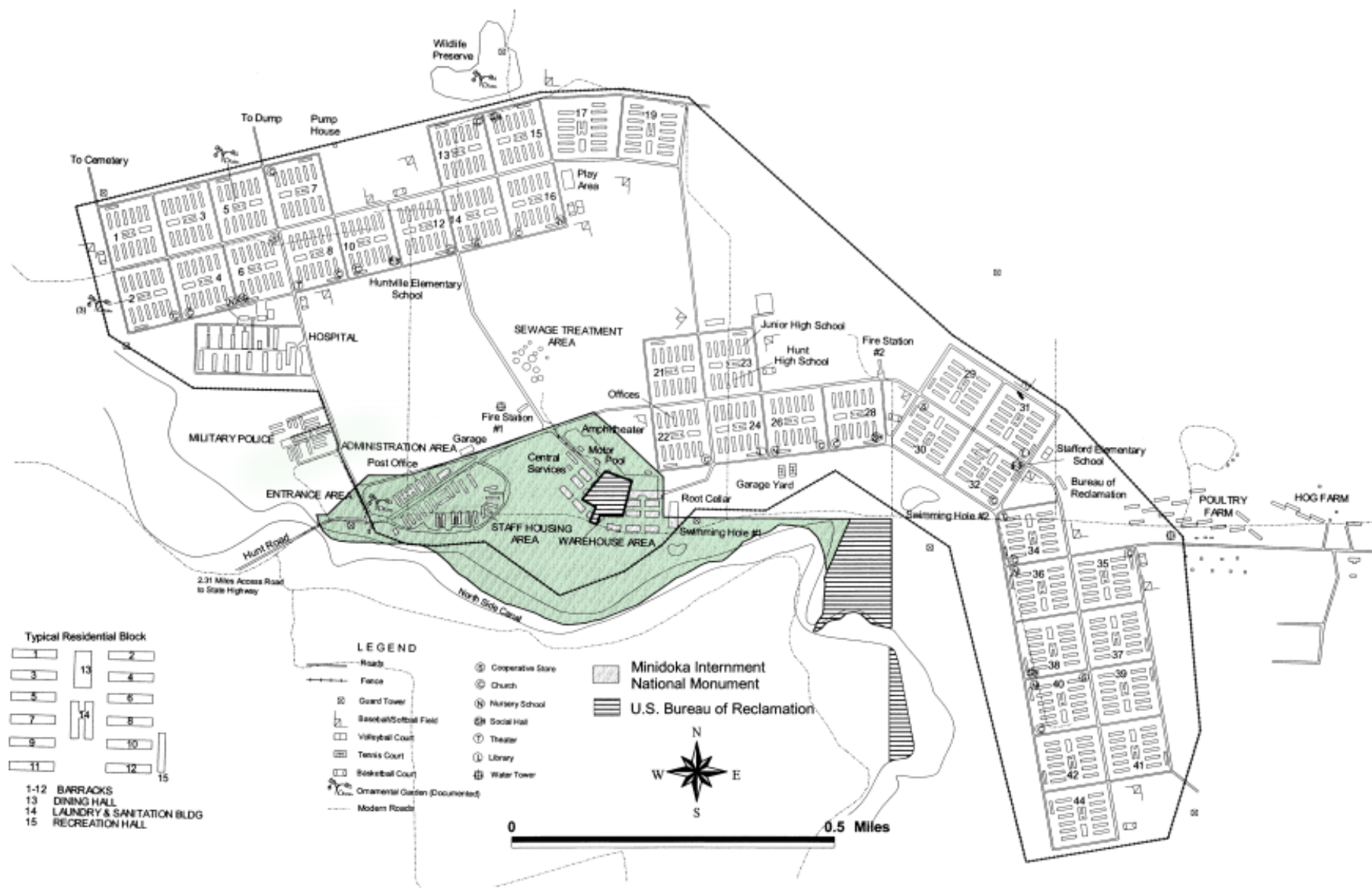
Aerial view of Minidoka Relocation Center. Circa 1943. Minidoka Interlude.

The first stage of development, from June 5, 1942, to February 5, 1943, encompassed the construction of all the necessary elements for the basic functioning of the site. The living quarters for the internees consisted of 36 blocks, measuring 470' x 530'. Each block contained 12 barracks and one recreation hall arranged around a mess hall and "H"-shaped lavatory-laundry building. The barracks were 20'x120' and divided into six rooms of varying sizes; each room housed one family unit, or four to six single individuals. Barracks were constructed on concrete footings, had gabled roofs, three main entrances, and 22 windows. They were timber-framed with insulation board and black asphalt saturated roofing paper for walls and roofs. Each room had a light fixture and a coal-burning stove.

Other buildings at the camp served the overall operations of the camp, including the administration, staff housing, hospital, military police, and warehouse buildings. Many of the buildings in the hospital and staff housing area had wood paneled siding and interior walls, a step up from the rest of the barracks. The only permanent structures were the military police building and reception building constructed of basalt boulders. Other significant features included four wells, two large water towers, and two fire stations.

The camp had been under construction for two months when on August 10, 1942, 212 Nikkei from Puyallup Assembly Center arrived at the Eden train stop. Beginning on August 16, internees

Minidoka Relocation Center-1945



Map Prepared by: Pacific West Region - Planning



Minidoka post office in the administration area. Circa 1943. Permission of University of Washington.



The Minidoka fire crew in front of fire station #1. March 1943. National Archives.



The hospital at Minidoka. June 1943. Permission of Wing Luke Asian Museum.

arrived at a rate of 500 per day from Puyallup and then from Portland. By September 14, 1942, all internees had been transferred to Minidoka bringing the population to 8,381. However, many internees left on farm labor projects early on, decreasing the population during the farm seasons. For internees accustomed to the lushness of Northwest, the sight of the sagebrush, dust, and barracks was a dramatic and depressing change (Takami 1992, 38).

The camp was about 75% complete while internees were arriving. "Work was several times abandoned when dust storms brought about utter darkness" (Stafford, H.L. Letter to Mr. Dillon S. Meyer, Director of WRA, WRA Files, September 26, 1945). In addition, the lack of sewage utilities posed a severe problem, and many internees fell ill to pto-



Administration area at Minidoka. Circa 1943. Permission of Wing Luke Asian Museum.

maine poisoning. There were two latrines to each block, which would flood regularly. Communal showers, toilet facilities, as well as thin walls between rooms generated an environment with little privacy.

During the fall of 1942, many of the internees helped the Morrison-Knudson contract laborers with the construction of the camp (*War Relocation Authority quarterly and semiannual reports 1942-46*). Rye was being planted to hold down the dust. The camp hospital was completed by October. Blocks 22 and 23 were organized into community enterprises and social services. From the Milner-Gooding Canal, a spur canal, called Lateral 21.5, was under construction. By fall, walkways in high use areas were being constructed, as the camp flooded with every storm. The sewage plant was under construction. Located in the center of the camp, near water tower #2, it included a pumphouse, digesters, clarifiers, filters, chlorine tanks, and a sewage lagoon 3 miles to the south. The lack of sewage facilities resulted in continuous outbreaks of diarrhea and ptomaine poisoning until February 5, 1943, when the plant began operation.

The organization of schools occurred in October and November of 1942. Nursery schools opened in Blocks 4, 16, 26, 36, and 40. Two elementary schools opened in mid-October. The Huntville Elementary School, located in Block 10, educated youngsters from Area #1; the Stafford Elementary School was located in Block 32, serving Area #2.

Hunt Middle School occupied half of Block 23. By mid-November, Hunt High School occupied the other half Block 23.

In November, a controversy began over the construction of the guard towers and barbed wire fence encircling the camp. Internees had been residing in the camp for months and respecting the 208 boundary signs before the fences and towers started going up. The guard towers and fence incited an even greater resentment against the internees' confinement and a conviction that the camps were actually concentration camps (*The Fence at Minidoka, WRA Files 1943*). There were outright protests, especially when the fence was electrified by the building contractor for a few hours on November 12. By December 5 the fence and guard towers were complete. Protests against the fence, and the argument that other camps were not encircled by barbed-wire led to its removal in the residential area in the spring of 1943. Two miles of the fence remained around the administration area (Ad Hill), the warehouse area, along the North Side Canal, across the entrance, and down to the hospital area until the closure of the camp in 1945.

As winter approached and temperatures dropped, coal for heating had not arrived. Internees cut and hauled sagebrush from the outlying areas to heat their rooms. Finally, after rumors of riots over the fuel shortage, coal arrived on December 20, 1942. Nearly every description of this early period cites the overwhelming dust and extreme temperatures,



Elderly Issei woman collecting coal at Minidoka. National Archives.

lack of plumbing and sewer facilities, and consequent hardships related to the fuel shortage. Stafford described this time as "the most regrettable part of the Minidoka history" (Stafford, H.L. Letter to Mr. Dillon S. Meyer, Director of WRA, WRA Files, September 26, 1945). More importantly however, the internees' endured psychological distress related to their forced removal, incarceration, and the uncertainty of their future.



Flooded area east of Block 3. Latrine and coal piles in the background. January 25, 1943. National Archives.



Constructing the irrigation canal controls in Minidoka's agricultural areas. June 27, 1944. National Archives.

Minidoka's agricultural project was to clear and bring in to cultivation "thousands of acres" by 1943. Yet, during the fall of 1942, just after the internees had arrived, nearly 2,500 internees went to the fields to help Idaho's farmers avert a severe labor shortage crisis. Many of these internees continued to help south-central Idaho's farmers in 1943 and 1944. In addition, once the Department of Defense allowed Nisei into the military in 1943, the number of able laborers was cut even shorter. Hence, the WRA adapted its ambitious land development plans to only a minimum level necessary for sustaining the camp's population (BOR *Minidoka Annual Project History* 1943).

Agricultural development and farm work at Minidoka employed hundreds of internees. Large-scale poultry and hog farms were developed and maintained for egg and meat products. Two root

cellars and a cannery and pickling plant were constructed by internees. Work on the Lateral 21.5 from the Milner-Gooding Canal was completed by BOR employees, the D.J. Cavanaugh Company contractors, and Minidoka internees. Farm units were platted along the lateral, and small irrigation ditches were built to convey water to these areas. In addition, ditches were dug throughout the central camp area to provide water for gardens in the Residential Blocks. In 1944, the Center harvested 7,300,000 pounds of produce in the surrounding agricultural fields, making the camp completely sustainable. Meanwhile, victory gardens were planted throughout the central area of the camp adjacent to barracks and schools. Ornamental gardens were developed for personal and community appreciation throughout the residential and administrative areas.

"Dust storm over, but everything inside the buildings is covered with a thick layer of fine soil, so thick that it takes several dustings to remove it all. Clearing the land of sagebrush and the absence of water make the dust hazard worse. Work clothes are much in evidence everywhere. Newcomers usually come the first day dressed as for a wedding, but afterward fall into line and dress to suit the environment." -Superintendent of Education Arthur Kleinkopf, Minidoka Relocation Center, October 21, 1942



An internee clearing sagebrush. April 1943. National Archives.



Internees clearing sagebrush at Minidoka. Circa 1943. National Archives.



“Be the causes what they may- economic, industrial, social, racial or all four, and if there be any other motives- the will of the people is the law of the government.” -Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, 1913

Hunt High School, located in Block 23. Circa 1945. National Archives.



Newly cleared agricultural fields at Minidoka. Circa 1943. National Archives.



Hunt High School gymnasium/auditorium. Circa 1945. National Archives.

Mud from rain and melting snow at Minidoka. December 10, 1942. Permission of University of Washington.



“Getting to the bath is a job because our shoes get stuck in the swampy mud. When the ground is frozen it’s fine, until the sun comes out. When it snows or rains, we have to swim through the mud to get anywhere...” - Hanaye Matsushita, September 19, 1942, Minidoka Relocation Center



Internees skating at Minidoka. January 5, 1943. National Archives.

Recreation areas were developed throughout the camp by internees. There were 13 softball/baseball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, volleyball courts, swimming holes, and an ice-skating rink. On the banks of the North Side Canal, men used rock and sagebrush to build small fishing shacks. Playgrounds were erected throughout the site. An amphitheater was sited adjacent to Block 22 to accommodate large outdoor gatherings. A gymna-

sium/auditorium building was constructed between 1943 and 1945, although it was never completed due to labor controversies and the closure of the camp. Additionally, a mile northwest of the camp, 3.64 acres of land was designated for use as a cemetery.

The Staff Housing Area was constructed between the administration buildings and the North Side Canal and was laid out in rows along a curving axis. The majority of the staff lived in Twin Falls and commuted to the site until the new staff housing was complete. The structures were more substantial buildings than the Theater of Operations standard barracks where the internees resided. Each apartment included a living and dining room, kitchen, bathroom, and one or more bedrooms.

Churches, community enterprises and activities, and a governing system of block managers were established to serve the internees and liaison with the WRA administration. The Minidoka newspaper, called the *Irrigator*, began publication in 1942. Operations for a community of roughly 10,000 people necessitated a wide variety of workers. Unskilled laborers were paid \$12 a month. Skilled laborers, such as carpenters, nurses, and cooks, were paid \$16 a month. Professional employees, such as doctors, engineers, and managers were paid \$19 a month. These wages were in stark contrast to the wages (\$72 to \$300 per week) paid to local construction workers who built the camp. Many internees had financial obligations from home; and these wages were inadequate to pay for mort-



Internees playing baseball at Minidoka. Circa 1944. National Archives. (Top)



Dance performance at Minidoka. Circa 1943. Permission of Wing Luke Asian Museum. (Bottom)



Hunt Area A, Girls 1944 Basketball Champs. "Calmbanettes." Block 1,5, and 8. National Archives.

gages and outstanding debts. As a result, many internees lost their homes, farms, and investments.

Life in Camp

Between 1942 and 1945, the internment and incarceration effected immeasurable change within the social structure of the Nikkei community. Events and movements during this period dramatically altered the social environment and dynamics within the camp. These events included the loyalty questionnaire, Tule Lake segregation, call for military service, agricultural labor projects, Indefinite Leave program, as well as constant social unrest.

It is widely recognized that the Issei generation was most impacted by the internment and incarceration experience. Not only were they denied citizenship, prevented from owning land, and were victimized by racism and discrimination in the pre-war period, they also suffered immeasurably as a result of their forced incarceration at Minidoka and other War Relocation Authority and Department of Justice and Army camps. Many Issei couples were separated for the duration of the war, with the men interned at Department of Justice and Army camps while the women were burdened with the family responsibilities of closing up their homes and businesses before the incarceration and then caring for the children and managing family affairs in the WRA camps. The Issei mens' status as providers and leaders for the Nikkei community was directly impacted by government policies, and as a result, there was a noticeable and

significant absence of Issei leadership in the WRA camps. This lack of Issei leadership forced Nisei to step forward to assist their families and communities, and their decisions and actions as representatives of the incarcerated Nikkei community occasionally gave rise to further tensions between the generations. Additionally, issues of loyalty and patriotism were exceptionally difficult for Issei, due to federal and state laws that prevented them from becoming naturalized U.S. citizens. The Issei bore significant losses due to loss of freedom, loss of property, loss of livelihood, and the weight of shame for being incarcerated as a result of their Japanese heritage.



Yamaguchi family in their room at Minidoka. December 1944. Permission of Wing Luke Asian Museum.



Internee George Nakashima, an architect from Seattle, constructed and decorated his model apartment. George Nakashima and his family settled in Pennsylvania and founded his furniture design studio. He became internationally renowned as one of the greatest furniture designers of the 20th century. Photograph by Francis Stewart. December 9, 1942. Permission of



Students in a free-hand drawing class. Photograph by Francis Stewart. December 9, 1942. Permission of the Bancroft Library.

“We are proud that our government is of the people, by the people, and for the people. We are proud that our government is based on the principles of ‘Liberty and Justice for All.’ When people think or act not in accord with these principles, we feel that the government ought to inform them of their mistakes. It is our hope that our government will try to point out to her people the significance of the issues raised by our evacuation.” - Tom Takeuchi, editor of the Minidoka Interlude and Minidoka internee, 1943



Internees creating a garden at Minidoka. Circa 1943. Permission of Wing Luke Asian Museum.



Interned mothers mending and sewing for children at the Hunt Nursery School. Circa 1944. National Archives.

“Three Japanese ladies secured a pass to go to Twin Falls to buy Sunday school and nursery school supplies... None of the three had been outside the camp since their arrival early in the summer. They were thrilled beyond words by the sight of trees, flowers, and green fields. One lady said, ‘Mr. Kleinkopf, I’d just like to get out of the car, walk over to one of those trees, touch it, and put my arms around it.’ A lump came into my throat as I tried, somewhat unsuccessfully, I’m sure, to understand, because only those who have experienced the sufferings and longings of a minority group whose members have been evacuated from their homes and all that home holds dear, can ever fully understand the feelings of the lady who wanted to caress the tree.”

-Superintendent of Education Arthur Kleinkopf, Minidoka Relocation Center, October 16, 1942



First Communion class of the Catholic Church at Minidoka. The Rev. L.H. Tibesar, Maryknoll missionary, is pastor. The nuns are Maryknoll sisters from Seattle where the Maryknoll group numbered 1000 Nikkei before WWII. September 8, 1943. National Archives.



Arts and crafts display in the auditorium. Circa 1945. National Archives.



Women doing laundry in washtubs. Circa 1943. Permission of Wing Luke Asian Museum.



Cooperative Store. Circa 1944. National Archives.



An internee working in the administration area at Minidoka. Circa 1944. National Archives.



Interned Dr. T. Uchida, Chief Dentist, polished false teeth at Minidoka. Photograph by Francis Stewart. December 10, 1942. Permission of the Bancroft Library.

"A friend of mine who is visiting the project asked me if I felt afraid working here. He said he would always be looking over his shoulder expecting a Japanese with a knife. He seemed to believe I was not sincere when I told him that I had never entertained such thoughts and that there was no danger here."

-Superintendent of Education Arthur Kleinkopf, Minidoka Relocation Center, November 7, 1942



Adult education welding class along the fenceline at Minidoka. June 1943. National Archives.

The internees' daily lives were centered in the residential area and more specifically within each internee's residential block. Rooms provided the minimum requirements necessary for living, including cots, mattresses, blankets, a coal-burning pot-bellied stove, and a single electric light bulb. Family members resided together, with up to eight people per room. Internees did what they could to improve their sparse living conditions, including improving and personalizing their rooms with furniture built from scrap lumber and items that could be shipped from home. Also, internees began to garden in the areas around the barracks. Vegetable, flower, and ornamental gardens were developed throughout Minidoka.

The organization of internees into blocks had a profound impact on the traditional family structure. Issei men were burdened most by internment and incarceration, as their traditional familial role as patriarch and financial supporter had been completely undermined (Kitagawa 1967). For Issei women, the internment and incarceration relieved them of some traditional duties that included shopping, cooking, and cleaning. Dining together was no longer a family routine, as children and teenagers dined with friends and schoolmates, and family members were regularly on leave for agricultural labor.

Tensions between the Issei and Nisei were exacerbated in the centers as a result of the WRA policies, emphasis on American culture, and breakdown of the traditional family structure. The WRA

allowed only American born Japanese the right to hold representative political positions within the camps. This policy denied the Issei's social power as community leaders and had an even greater impact on traditional Japanese cultural values related to honoring and respecting elders and family. As a result, the Issei had "little authority, responsibility, or opportunity to improve their futures or those of their families" (Tamura 1993: 207). For the Nisei, the experience posed a different set of circumstances, opportunities, and setbacks. They took the roles as community leaders and made life-changing decisions about their individual patriotism and family honor. Nisei children often saw the experience as an adventure away from home. A widening gap between the Issei and Nisei evolved over the duration of the Word War II, manifesting itself in the cultural characteristics and preferences of the more Japanese Issei and more American Nisei.

One of the most divisive issues during the historic period was the WRA's questionnaire, later termed the loyalty questionnaire, which was originally intended to determine the loyalty of potential draftees. The questionnaire was then used to expedite the resettlement of internees away from the West Coast by determining individuals' loyalty or disloyalty to the U.S. Entitled "Application for Indefinite Leave Clearance," the questionnaire was given to every person over the age of 17 regardless of whether they intended to seek resettlement or not. The controversial questions were Numbers 27 and 28.



"Tura Nakamura, block manager of block 42-44 presents ceremonial Tai fish to Project Director, H.L. Stafford and Philip Schafer, assistant project director, on behalf of the block managers as a token of appreciation for the manner in which the administration helped to make the Army volunteering program a success." April 1943. National Archives.

Question 27: “Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered”? was asked of draft-age men. For others the questionnaire asked whether they would be willing to join the Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps.

Question 28: “Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization?”

Question 28 for Issei, who were not allowed to become naturalized U.S. citizens, was particularly ambiguous and confusing. If they answered “yes” to being loyal to the United States, they were left without a nationality and thus no governmental protection. And the questionnaire did not describe what the consequences would be for answering the questions. Nisei answering the questions were not sure if answering “yes” to both meant they were volunteering for the armed forces or if they answered “no” would mean removal to Japan. Some internees answered “no” to protest the injustice of the whole internment and incarceration or because they had suffered economic tragedy and they believed prospects in Japan may have been better. Others answered “no” simply because they were loyal to Japan rather than the U.S. The responses to these questions would determine the fate of each internee confined in the centers. At Minidoka, 97%



May Yasutake, a former internee from Minidoka, resettled to Cincinnati, Ohio to work as a cashier at the University of Cincinnati cafeteria. June 1943. Permission of the Bancroft Library.



WRA suggestion box. Circa 1944. National Archives.



Sam Kimura and Cliff Dakama, former internees from Minidoka, and Fujisada Takawa, former internee of Topaz, pile up shells at a Nebraska depot. November 11, 1944. Photographer: Takashi Sidney Aoyama. Permission of the Bancroft Library.

“It is shocking to the conscience that an American citizen can be confined on the ground of disloyalty, and then, while so under duress and restraint, be compelled to serve in the armed forces or be prosecuted for not yielding to such compulsion. [The] defendant is deprived of liberty without due process of law and by reason thereof, [his] plea is not and cannot be voluntary.” - Judge Louis Goodman, U.S. District Court, July 22, 1944



"A Minidoka Relocation Center evacuee and an evacuee being transferred to the Tule Lake Center grasp hands in a final farewell as the train carrying the 254 evacuees to the Tule Lake Center prepares to leave." September 5, 1943. National Archives. (Top)

High school teachers assist arriving internees from Tule Lake. September 5, 1943. National Archives. (Bottom)



Relocating from Minidoka. Circa 1944. National Archives.

of the population answered "yes-yes" to the loyalty questions, the highest rate of "loyalty" of the 10 camps.

Those who answered "no" to either question were considered disloyal or "segregants" and sent to Tule Lake Segregation Center in northern California. A total of 328 internees from Minidoka, including those who answered "no" to one or both ques-

tions, and their family members were sent to Tule Lake in 1943. Nearly 2,000 internees who answered "yes" at Tule Lake were transferred to Minidoka in 1943.

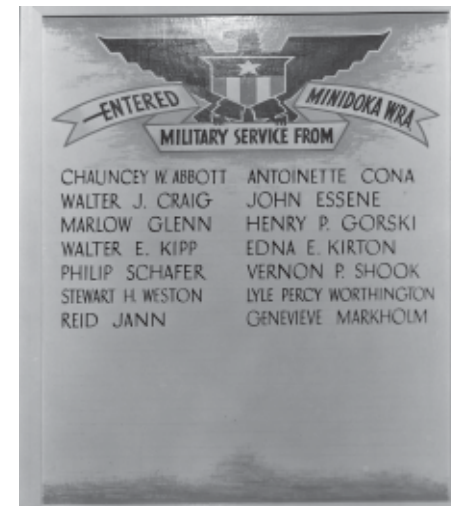
Tule Lake was originally a WRA Relocation Center, however, it was selected as the segregation center as nearly 50% of its population refused to take the questionnaire or answered "no" to one or both

questions. Those that answered “yes, yes” could transfer to other camps. However, approximately four thousand Tule Lake internees who answered “yes, yes” chose to stay at Tule Lake rather than transfer; these internees were often called the “Old Tuleans. Other people who were sent to Tule Lake included: those who applied for expatriation or repatriation to Japan, those denied leave clearance due to some accumulation of adverse evidence in their records, aliens from Department of Justice internment camps who were recommended for detention, and family members of segregants who chose to remain with family (U.S. CWRIC 1997: 208).

Internees who answered “yes” were allowed to apply for release from the WRA centers on indefinite leave for employment, education, and the armed forces which began in 1943. Over 4,000 internees left Minidoka on the indefinite leave program, with roughly half going to farm work in the local Idaho and eastern Oregon area. Others left for work and settlement in Salt Lake City, Denver, Chicago, and major cities in the Midwest and Northeast. In 1943, Minidoka had the highest rate of resettlement for all centers, with 22 per 1,000 internees leaving the center per month, compared with the average 14 per 1,000 for all centers (Sakoda 1989: 258).

Draft age men answering “yes” were then allowed to serve in the military. In 1943, Roosevelt established an all Nisei unit, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and called for volunteers from the WRA centers. Several Nisei resisted the draft in order to

protest the internment and incarceration. They believed that the injustice of being incarcerated outweighed their duty to serve in the U.S. military. These “no no boys” would eventually be sent to federal prisons for as much as two years for this choice. The Nisei at Minidoka distinguished themselves as loyal citizens, and eventually 1,000 names were listed on Minidoka’s honor roll as having served in the American armed forces. Minidoka had less than 7 percent of the male population of all the centers, yet it provided 25 percent of the volunteers. Nisei from Minidoka served in the 442nd, Military Intelligence Service and Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps. Seventy-three soldiers from Minidoka died in combat during World War II. William Nakamura and James Okubo were formerly Minidoka internees who were awarded Medals of Honor posthumously for their service during World



WRA staff honor roll. Circa 1944. National Archives. (Top)



Hatoshi Kanzaki, a soldier in the U.S. military, visits his parents at the Minidoka Relocation Center. National Archives.



"Sogoro Yamasaki, 75, born in Japan but an Oregonian for nearly 50 years, is extremely proud of his three sons, all Purple Heart veterans." November 30, 1946. Oregonian Collection. Permission of Oregon Historical Society.

*"Loyalty," 'disloyalty,'
Such words to plague us
yesterday.
Today,
In eyes made red with weeping."
-Internee, 1942*



Language instructor Grayce Nakasonke teaches students at the Japanese Language school at the University of Colorado. She was incarcerated in a WRA camp before volunteering to work as a language instruction for the Military Intelligence Service. April 22, 1943. National Archives.



Nikkei soldiers training for combat at Camp Shelby. These soldiers were incarcerated in WRA camps before training. July 1945. National Archives.



Buddhist funeral service for a fallen Minidoka soldier. Circa 1944. National Archives.



Christian funeral service for a fallen Minidoka soldier. Circa 1944. National Archives.



"It is the inherent right of every faithful citizen, regardless of ancestry to bear arms in the nation's battle...."
—Hon. Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, Jan. 1943

HONOR ROLL

MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER
HUNT, IDAHO
SERVING IN U.S. ARMY

"Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart; Americanism is not, and never was a matter of race or ancestry...."
President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Feb. 19, 1943

ABE, GEORGE ABE, GEORGE J. ABE, HARRY AKAOI, ISAMU AKIMOTO, JACK JUN ANDO, BOB MINDRU ADKI, TORU ADYAMA, SAMUEL SAKAE ARATANI, AUGUSTINE ARIYASU, TATSUYA ASABA, TAKAHICO ASAHARA, YOSHIO ASAKAWA, JACK ASHIDA, HARUO BARA, SADA DEGUCHI, MASARO MIKE DOJ, AUTHER NOBUO EDUCHI, EUGENE Y. ENDO, ROBERT TSUPPOSHI ENTA, BEN FUGAKI, ROY FUJIIHARA, JULIUS Y. FUJINO, YASUO FUJIOKA, TADASHI FUJITA, KANAME FUJIWARA, PETER FUJIWARA, ROY FUJIWARA, YOSHIO FUKUI, EDWIN YUKIO FUSHIMI, CARL NOBORU FUSHIMI, HERBERT W. GOSHIO, HENRY HIRAHARA HABU, JACK HAGIWARA, MIKE HAGIWARA, PAT HARA, BEN HARA, MENDU HARA, NORIO HASEGAWA, MATEW MASATO	HATA, GEORGE HATANAKA, FRANK HAYAKAWA, JUN HAYASHI, EUGENE HAYASHI, JOEZO HAYASHI, MEIJI HAYAMOTO, HIROGUMU HIDAKA, FRANK HIGASHI, KEN HIGASHI, ROY HIGASHI, SHO HIGASHI, TEDDY HIJURASHI, ISAMU SAM HIKIDA, GEORGE HIKIDA, ISAMU HINATSU, KAZUO HIRAKI, TOM HIRAI, HIROSHI HIRAI, TAKAHIKI HIRATA, OSAMU HIRATSUKA, FRANK F. HIROMURA, KOZO HIROO, SHODO HONGO, SHIDERO HORIATA, TADAO HORIUCHI, BEN HOSHI, JAMES ICHIKAWA, ALBERT HIROSHI ICHIKAWA, JOE I. IHARA, BOB IHASHI, WILLIAM WATARU IKADA, HITOSHI IKEDA, KOWEI IKEDA, MASAO IKOMA, SADA IMAI, HIDEO IMAI, TAKAO IMORI, HENRY IMORI, THOMAS IMAMOTO, WILLIAM	INANISHI, MINORU INDOUE, MIDORI IRIHADA, FRED MITSUKARU ISHIDA, HARUO ISHII, KEIICHI ISHIKAWA, GEORGE ISHIKAWA, ITSUZO ISOSHIMA, TAKIO ITAMI, GEORGE ITO, BEN YOSHIO ITO, JOE ITO, JOJI IWAOKA, STEVE IWANO, SHIRO IZUMI, VICTOR IZUMI, DAVID YUKIO HOKARI, SAMUEL YOSHIO KAJIWARA, FRANK KANEHASHI, JOHN SHUJI KANAYA, JIMMY KANAZAWA, HIROSHI KANEMITSU, HITOSHI KANO, NOBUYUKI KANZAKI, AKIRA KARIKOMI, TEDDY YUKIO KASHINO, SHIRO KATAOKA, HARRY KATAYAMA, SADA KATO, AKIRA KATO, HARUO KATO, YOSHIO KAWADA, NOBORU KAWAGUCHI, JOHN R. KAWAGUCHI, KENNY KAWAGUCHI, MASAO KAWAKAMI, IWAO KAWAMURA, SAM KAWATA, KAZUYOSHI KAZAHARA, DONALD KESAHARA, JOE	KIKUCHI, ISAMU KIMURA, GEORGE KIMURA, KAZUO KIMURA, MAKOTO KIMURA, MICHIO KINOSHITA, FRANCIS KINOSHITA, YOSHIO KITAGAWA, HIROSHI KITAHARA, TOICHIRO KIYOHARA, ICHIRO ICHUKE KIYOMURA, KAZUO KIYONAGA, TOSHIKO KOMAYASHI, THOMAS TAKIO KOKUBU, JIM TOSHIO KOMACHI, GEORGE MINORU KOMACHI, ROY KAZUYUKI KOMOTO, GEORGE KOBAYASHI, TOSHIKI KOURA, ART KOZU, HARRY SHINJI KOZU, PETE MASARU KOZU, VEICHI KUBOTA, TAKESHI KUBOTA, TOM KUMADA, TERRY TERRY KURIMURA, TERRY MASARU KUSHI, SHIGERU KYONO, HIROSHI MAEDA, RICHARD MANUECKI, MORIO F. MARUMOTO, GEORGE YOSHIO MASUDA, MINORU MASUOKA, MASAYOSHI MATSUMURA, FRANK MATSUMURA, JOHN TAKESHI	MATSUI, HIFUMI MATSUMOTO, DONALD MARCO MATSUMURA, HENRY TAKI MATSUMOTO, GEORGE MATSUMOTO, WAKAO MATSUYAMA, HENRY MICHIGAMI, MIKE MINAKA, GEORGE MINATO, HOWARD MITA, THOMAS MIZUKAMI, ROBERT TARO MIZUKAMI, WILLIAM MIZUKI, TAKESHI MIZUTA, YOSHIO MOCHIZUKI, AYAO MOCHIZUKI, YOSHISADA MOMODA, SHIGERU MOMODA, TAKESHI MORI, MINO MORI, YOSHIO MORIHARA, FRED MORIKAWA, MASATO MORIO, NOBORU MORTSMITH, GEORGE MORISHITA, YUTAKA MORIMASU, VICTOR ICHIRO MOTOKI, SEIICHI MURAKI, MINORU MURAKAMI, HISUO MURAKAMI, CHARLES MITSUO MURAKAMI, JOHN Y. MURAKAMI, LARRY TOSHI NAEMURA, JOE S. NAGAO, EIRA NAGAO, KAZUO NAGAO, MAMORU	MASAKI, MASAYUKI MASAKAWA, JAMES KIRO MASATA, HUIJIO NABABAYASHI, KAZUO NAKAMURA, BINEICHI ICHIRO NAKAMURA, BILL NAKAMURA, GEORGE NAKAMURA, KARL KAGRE NAKAMURA, NED T. NAKASHIMA, HIROSHI NAKASHIMA, VICTOR NAKASHIMADA, SUSUMU NAKATANI, NOBORU NAKAWATANI, TAKESHI NAMBIA, TOM NEZU, SHIGEKI NIGUMA, KEV NINOMIYA, BEN NISHIKAWA, HARRY NISHIMOTO, MASAKI NISHIMOTO, ROBERT MASARU NISHIMOTO, YUJI NISHIMURA, FRANK G. NISHIMURA, HIROYUKI NISHIMURA, HISASHI NISHITANI, THOMAS NISHITANI, WOODROW NOSAKI, MASARU MAC NOJIRI, GEORGE NOMA, TOSHIO NOMURA, BICE NOMURA, FRANK S. NOMURA, PAUL NOBORU NOMURA, WAY NORIKAWA, TOM KOHAKI	NORITAKE, YOSHITO NOSE, JAMES CHIZUMI NUKUTO, TADASHI ORA, JULIUS ORA, STANLEY V. OGA, WILLIAM OGAWA, TERRY OGISHIMA, JOHN SASHIRO OHKA, JAMES KAZUO OHKA, HENRY OHKA, KAZUO OHNO, ISAMU OKADA, FRANK CHIAKI OKADA, KIVOSHI OKADA, ROBERT OKADA, TAKAO OKAMOTO, HISAKA OKAMURA, GEORGE OKANO, GEORGE KOICHI OKANO, KOICHI OKANO, TEIJI OKAWA, HIROSHI OKAZAKI, ISAO OKAZAKI, K. OKAZAKI, TAKESHI OKAZAKI, TOM TOMOSHI OKAZAKI, WILLIAM OKITA, FRANK TOSHIO OKITA, FRED YOSHIO OKITSU, GEORGE KABUTO OKIURA, HIFUMI OMOTO, TATSUO OMOTO, TAKETO ONISHI, FRED ONISHI, GEORGE ONODA, HIDEO SAM	ONODERA, KO ONODERA, KAUM ONODERA, SATORU OTA, KENNETH KENJI OTASAKI, CHARLES OTANI, WILLIAM OUCHI, ALBERT YOSHIO OYE, TETSUYA OZAKI, MICHAEL MASAKI OZAWA, BILL HARUO OZAWA, ROY T. OZIMA, SHISENDO SADANI, CHARLES SADANI, KAHACHI SAJIHARA, KEN SAITO, ARNER SAITO, DILLY MASAKARU SAITO, MASARU SAITO, TSUKASA SAITO, TSUTOMU SAKAI, PAUL JUN SAKAI, SAM E. SAKAI, SHIGEO TOM SAKO, SADA SAKUMA, TADASHI SAKURA, CHESTER SAKURA, HOWARD SASAKI, EDWARD SASUKU SASAKI, SAM SASAKI, TOM TOSHI SASAO, EICHI SATO, EDIE HIROSHI SATO, GEORGE KEIJI SATO, HIROMITSU JOHN SATO, KAY NEUMI SATO, SHIN	SHIMADA, BILL MASAYUKI SHIMBA, KEMO SHIMIZU, JIM T. SHIMIZU, TAKED SHIOGI, MOO SHIOGI, SAM SHIOTA, HIROSHI SHIOTA, MANDU SHIOZAKI, MASARU SHIRAHANA, TAKED SHIRANE, KAY SHOJI, GEORGE Y. SHOJI, MACK SATO SONODA, JAYON SHIGEO SUOHIMURA, JAMES SUMIDA, HIROSHI SUMIDA, NOB SUMIDA, SHIGEO SUNAMOTO, SATORU TOMY SUSUMI, ARTHUR ASARI SUYAMA, TOMMY SUZAKA, JOHN SUZUKI, HENRY SUZUKI, JIM TERUFUKI SUZUKI, ROY TACHIRO, GEORGE TACHIVAMA, JACK TADA, JACK TADA, KAZUO TAKARA WILLIAM HARUTOSHI TAKAYOSHI, S. C. TAKAYOSHI, SATORU TAKAYOSHI, TEIJI	TAKAYOSHI, TOMIO TAKEMOTO, TERUO TAKEMOTO, TOME TAKEMOTO, YOSHIE TAKETA, GEORGE OUNJI TAKETA, JIM TAKIZAWA, GEORGE TAMAKI, PAUL ISAO TAMURA, HIROSHI TAMURA, JIMMY GEORGE TANAKA, FRANK T. TANAKA, SANJI GRANT TANAKA, MATT TANAKA, NOBUICHI TANAKA, WARREN MITSUAKI TANI, KENJI TANIMOTO, AKIRA TASHIRO, GEORGE M. TASUMI, GEORGE TATSUDA, CHARLES TATSUDA, JAMES TERAO, ROY SADA TERAO, SADA TOCHIHARA, YUKIO TOMITA, FRANK T. TOMITA, TADAO TOYA, GEORGE TOYOTA, MINORU TSUBOI, SATORU TSUCHIYA, JOI TSUCHIYA, JUNZO TSUGAWA, HENRY TSUKI, ROY TSUKUBI, ROBERT T. TSUNEMITSU, SATORU UCHIDA, JACK UCHIDA, PAUL UCHIMURA, GEORGE ISAMU	ORATA, ROBERT KIVOSHI UTAHARA, HOWARD WAKAMATSU, JOSEPH WATANABE, TEO WATANABE, MASAO WATANABE, KIMIO YABU, HIROICHI YABUKI, KIVOSHI YAGUCHI, KENJI YANAGI, HIROSHI YANAGI, SHIZUO YAMAMOTO, MASAO YAMAMOTO, MITSURU YAMAMOTO, RICHARD YAMAMOTO, GEORGE YAMASAKI, IRVING T. YAMASHITA, HARRY YAMASHITA, MORIKAZU YAMASHITA, MUTU YAMASHITA, SETSUO YAMASHITA, GEORGE NOBORU YANAGIMACHI, BILL YANAGIMACHI, FRANK YANAGIMACHI, HARRY L. YASUTAKE, WILLIAM YODA, HAYAO YONEVAMA, TOSHIO YOSHINO, HIROSHI YOUNG, KENNETH ASAHARA, SAM SUMIO HOSHIMURA, ARTHUR T. HUIJI, GEORGE YUKIO YAMASAKI, TEO YAMASAKI, KAWIEMI
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DEC 13 1943

Minidoka honor roll. Circa 1943. National Archives.



"The Sign Shop." The man in the painting is printing the names on the Minidoka Honor Roll. Kenjiro Nomura. 1943. Courtesy of George and Betty Nomura.

War II. At the end of WWII, the 442nd was known for its slogan, "Go for Broke," and became the most decorated unit in American military history for its size and length of service.

Minidoka developed a reputation early on for its relatively mild social climate, patriotism to the U.S., good relations between the internees and the administration, and its success in relocating internees to the outside for agricultural labor and for re-settlement. However, some regarded the Minidokans as "knuckling under to administrative demands" (Sakoda 1989: 229). This moderate passivity changed late in 1943, when 2,000 "loyals" were transferred from Tule Lake to Minidoka, the camp's administration was restructured, and a program was initiated to reduce the internee labor force by one-third while increasing hours in a work week (Sakoda 1989: 262). A series of strikes and protests resulted, progressively diminishing relations between the administration and the internees. The first was a boiler room labor strike, then a mail carriers strike, and then similar conflicts with the gatekeepers, telephone operators, warehouse workers, pickling plant workers, community activities section, and finally the construction crew working on the gymnasium (Sakoda 1989: 263). Most of these labor conflicts were never settled agreeably, leaving both sides dissatisfied with the mediation process and the decisions.

Closure and Nikkei Departure

On December 20, 1944, the WRA officially lifted the ban on persons of Japanese ancestry in military areas #1 and #2, effectively opening up the entire West Coast for Nikkei resettlement. All construction was issued to stop on February 10, 1945. All construction work was transferred to building crates and boxes for the internees returning to their homes along the West Coast or other destinations within the U.S.

While the internees were packing and preparing for their departure, the WRA opened bidding for the lease of the 758 acres of the center's agricultural lands. During the late summer of 1945, despite the uncertainty of conditions on the West Coast, most internees hastily departed, eager to rebuild their lives. By September, there were empty barracks in every block with miscellaneous goods left behind;



Crowds at Fourth and Pike on V-J Day, Seattle. August 14, 1945. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

and witnesses say the area resembled a ghost town with scrawny packs of dogs and starving cats (Kleinkopf 1942-1946). German prisoners of war (POW) from a nearby POW camp at Rupert assisted in the decommissioning of the camp. The WRA provided \$25 per person, train fare, and meals en route for those with less than \$500 in cash. Some elderly Issei felt the government owed them a place to stay, given their circumstances of forced removal and loss of freedom in the camp. They also feared the West Coast was still too hostile and refused to leave the camp. Finally, the last few remaining internees were forcibly removed from the camp and put on trains to Seattle in October 1945; the Minidoka Relocation Center officially closed on October 28, 1945.

The WRA announced that all the barracks would be put in a “standby” condition. All unnecessary items were hauled to the landfill located on the



Vandalism on Nikkei home in Seattle. 1945. Permission of Museum of History & Industry.

WAR II HISTORY PROJECT
Dr. L. S. Cressman, Director
Museum of Natural History, University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—REGULAR SESSION

House Joint Memorial No.9

Introduced by Representatives BULL, POOLE and ERWIN and read
February 28, 1945

1 *To His Excellency, the Honorable President of the United States:*

2 We, your memorialists, the forty-third legislative assembly of the state

3 of Oregon, in regular session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

4 Whereas the armed forces, through their duly authorized representa-

5 tives, have closed certain relocation centers and have issued orders per-

6 mitting certain Japanese aliens and United States citizens of Japanese

7 extraction to return to the west coast states, and particularly to the state

8 of Oregon; and

9 Whereas there exists in the state of Oregon considerable antagonism to

10 such return during the period of the war with Japan; and

11 Whereas such Japanese aliens and citizens of Japanese extraction are

12 safer and cause less civilian disturbance in the relocation centers or in their

13 present places of residence; now, therefore,

14 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Oregon, the*

15 *Senate jointly concurring therein:*

16 That your Excellency, the President of the United States of America,

17 as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, is respectfully requested to issue

18 such orders and directives as will prevent the return of said Japanese aliens

19 and said citizens of Japanese extraction to the west coast states for the

20 duration of the present war with Japan.

Oregon House Joint Memorial Number 9 requesting that Nikkei be lawfully prevented from returning to the West Coast during the war with Japan. February 28, 1945. Oregon Historical Society.



Vandalism in the Japanese section of the Rose City Cemetery in Portland. 1944. National Archives.

northern edge of the camp. The entire camp was inventoried in November and December. The work was done by the WRA staff, who continued to live in the staff housing area, as well as the German POWs from the Rupert POW camp. In December, WRA lumber, supplies, and equipment and the many thousands of items left by internees were sold. The post office remained open and was run by a Nikkei couple. On February 9, 1946, the camp property officially reverted back to the BOR.

Internees returning home, rebuilding their lives, or settling in new areas of the nation encountered continued prejudice as well as new adversities. Many families returned to find their homes and businesses looted or their possessions stolen. Many families lost their businesses and properties, since their wartime salaries were insufficient to make payments on their mortgages and debts. A post-war housing shortage made housing extremely hard to find, so families often stayed at churches and community centers until they could secure new homes. Employment was also limited, particularly for Issei who were still viewed as the enemy. Yet, rebuilding their lives was a necessity, and most were determined to overcome the stigma of their wartime experiences through perseverance.

While the vast majority of Nikkei returned to their pre-war regions or settled in major cities in the East, some 8,000 Nikkei repatriated or expatriated to Japan after World War II ended (TenBroek 1954). Of those, 65% were born in the U.S., composed of Nisei, Kibei (a Nisei who spent a portion of his or her pre-World War II childhood in Japan), and Nisei



Vandalism at the Tacoma Buddhist Temple. Tacoma Nikkei stored their possessions at the temple while they were incarcerated during World War II. 1944. National Archives.

minors accompanying their parents (Daniels 1981: 116). By 1951, all but 357 applied for return to the U.S. (Smith 1995: 444).

In 1948, the government established the Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act, which attempted to reimburse property damages and losses. Over time, \$38 million was settled in 23,000 claims for damages totaling \$131 million; and the final claim was adjudicated in 1965. The best estimates of financial losses range from \$77 million to \$400 mil-



Japanese repatriates embarking for Japan at Pier 37 in Seattle. November 24, 1945. National Archives.



Japanese repatriates embarking for Japan at Pier 37 in Seattle. November 24, 1945. National Archives.



The Terumatsu Yabuki family was reunited after World War II on their Bellevue farm. The Yabukis were incarcerated at Minidoka during World War II. May 17, 1945. Photographer: Hikaru Iwasaki. National Archives.

lion. The Commission Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians determined that immeasurable “economic hardships and suffering” resulted from the internment and incarceration (U.S. CWRIC 1997).

For the Nikkei community, the wartime incarceration was the defining event in the community’s history. The incarceration damaged the dignity and identity of the Nikkei community and generated divisive rifts between generations, community organizations, and individuals over issues of patriotism and loyalty. Many Nikkei suffered severe economic losses, were forcibly incarcerated at remote camps, and were obliged to rebuild their lives after the war. The experience of injustice and racism at the hands of the federal government and American public created a stigma of shame that prevented most former internees from discussing their experiences for decades. This shame often resulted in the denial of Nikkei cultural heritage, high numbers of marriage outside their culture, as well as the need to prove themselves by succeeding in American society. The incarceration has had deep and lasting impacts that have affected not only the Issei and Nisei but also subsequent generations.

1946-Present: Homesteading and the Establishment of a Farming Community

During 1946, the BOR improved the canals and irrigation ditches and officially subdivided the agricultural lands into small farmsteads. Most buildings would be allotted to future homesteaders on the former Minidoka WRA Center site.

On June 14, 1947, the first land drawing was held in Jerome, Idaho, for 43 farms ranging in size from 80-190 acres along Lateral 21.5, encompassing 3,500 acres of the former Minidoka Relocation Center (BOR *Minidoka Annual Project History* 1947: 44-46). Most drawing applicants were Caucasian World War II veterans, as they had been given a 90-day preference. The second land drawing was held on April 17, 1949, for nine farmsteads, averaging 80 acres in size, within the central area of the former Minidoka Relocation Center. Another land drawing was held in 1950 (Idaho Statesman, February 18, 1950). Each homesteader would receive two barracks (20’x120’) and one smaller building plus many personal items.

The transformation of the WRA Center to an emergent agricultural community was hasty and efficient, as most of the lands had already been



WRA Staff Housing. Circa 1943. National Archives.

cleared during construction of the camp in 1942 and then by internees for agricultural production. Homesteaders lived in converted barracks, and a state vocational agricultural school was established to assist these new homesteaders. During the first few years, the homesteaders cleared the land where barracks and gardens once stood. All the old building foundations and construction rubble was hauled to the camp dump-site. The homesteaders established their ranchettes, and many homesteaders lived in the barrack buildings until as late as the 1970s (Shrontz 1994). Farming has continued as the primary occupation and land use of the area up to the present day.

Within the site of the former camp, a veteran named John Herrmann acquired 128 acres on the former location of Minidoka's fire station, water



Moving a staff housing building to its new site in the warehouse area. Circa 1946. Photograph taken by Bureau of Reclamation staff. NPS Photo.

tower, sewage treatment facility, blocks 21, 22, and portions of other blocks. In 1950, he was recalled for active duty at Fort Lewis in Washington (Shrontz 1994: 219-220), and Herrmann's military service caused a delay in the development of his homestead and farm. In the spring of 1952 the development of the Herrmann farm benefited from a demonstration project that was sponsored by the North Side Conservation District of the US Soil Conservation Service and an association of Jerome County Farm Equipment Dealers. The event was called "A-Farm-In-A-Day" and took place on April 17, 1952. It mobilized over 1,500 workers and made use of 200 state-of-the-art machines to prepare the land for farming. In the course of the day, a house was built, a well was dug, two barracks and outbuildings were moved to the farm, fences were put up, and windbreaks and crops were planted (Shrontz 1994: 223, Beal and Wells 1959: 300).

Roads were built to accommodate the new settlers and the agricultural economy. The new West Hunt Road and spur roads were aligned and constructed in the 1950s by Jerome County Roads, and Hunt Bridge was updated with concrete and steel supports.

The BOR retained approximately 50 acres of the original camp along the North Side Canal, including the former entrance, staff housing area, and swimming hole. This property was the former site of the ornamental garden at the entrance, administration area, and portions of the warehouse area and root cellar. Another 20 acres were



These World War II veterans won land lotteries at the former Minidoka Relocation Center site. With the land, they also received surplus materials from the camp. Circa 1947. Photograph taken by Bureau of Reclamation staff. NPS Photo. (Top and Bottom)

under public domain and managed by the BLM. These areas were not altered in any significant way after the buildings were cleared in the late 1940s.

1978-Present: Commemoration, Redress, and Recognition

On February 19, 1978, 2,000 people gathered at the Puyallup Fairgrounds for the first "Day of Remembrance" event in order to remember the historic events of the internment and incarceration of Nikkei during World War II. Since 1978, "Day of

Remembrance" events are held on February 19 in major cities throughout the nation; these events honor former internees and educate the public about the internment and incarceration.

In 1978, the Japanese American Citizens League unanimously adopted redress as its priority issue at its convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. Convention delegates also adopted the recommended redress guidelines. The guidelines consisted of a proposal asking for \$25,000 for each individual or heir who suffered from mass incarceration plus the creation

EVERYONE OUT!

FOR THE BIG
**A FARM-
IN-A-DAY**

**THURSDAY
APRIL 17**

WATCH THE MODERN
MIRACLE OF MAKING
A COMPLETE
FARM IN ONE
SINGLE
DAY



A Farm-in-a-Day project advertisement for the Herrmann family farm which ran in the North Side News. The Herrmann farm is located on the site of the former water tower #2, fire station, sewage treatment plant, Blocks 21 and 22, and portions of adjacent blocks. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service), April 17, 1952.

of a foundation to serve as a trust for funds to be used to benefit Japanese American communities throughout the country. After the convention, the Japanese American Citizens League launched a media campaign to educate the American public about the World War II incarceration and sought legislation in the U.S. Congress.

On August 18, 1979, the Minidoka WRA Center was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, recognizing its national significance. The historic site consisted of 6.06 acres in the entrance area, including the military police building, visitor reception building, garden, and the original visitor parking lot located between Hunt Bridge and the entrance buildings. On October 13, 1979 a dedication ceremony was held at the site, a national register plaque was placed near the military police building, and a large interpretive sign was erected.

In 1979, six U.S. senators introduced a bill to create the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. On July 31, 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed Public Law 96-317, establishing the Commission and initiating the investigation of these wartime events. The Commission held hearings nationwide with over 750 witnesses, the majority of whom were Nikkei who experienced incarceration. On February 22, 1983 the Commission made public its report, *Personal Justice Denied*. Their conclusion after 18 months of research was that “the exclusion and detentions of Nikkei was not determined by military conditions but were the result of race prejudice, war hysteria, and failure of political leadership” (U.S. CWRIC 1997: 194).

Japanese American Citizens League, Pocatello Blackfoot Chapter

Many organizations and agencies actively sought to preserve and recognize the historical significance of the Minidoka Relocation Center site before it was designated a national monument in 2001. The groups included the Japanese American Citizens League, Jerome County Historical Society, Bureau of Reclamation, groups of former internees, and local residents and organizations. More than any other entity, the Pocatello Blackfoot Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League was an advocate for the site and pursued site protection and state and national recognition.

Japanese Americans in the Pocatello Blackfoot area were not incarcerated at Minidoka or other WRA camps, but this did not mean they were unaffected by the wartime events. The hysteria and strong anti-Japanese feelings which drove the exclusion and incarceration policy affected this group as well, and they were subjected to discrimination in many forms, including acts of violence. Throughout the war they sought to do what they could for those removed from the West Coast. During the so-called “voluntary evacuation” period, they attempted to aid in the relocation of some to the south eastern Idaho area, but were met with harsh rebuke by Idaho’s governor. This resulted in some public distancing of any effort to assist those forced to leave their homes on the West Coast. Because of these circumstances and in others as well, government policies and actions by public officials created conditions of division among the local Nikkei and the excluded people, divisions which have taken a long time to reconcile. The Pocatello Blackfoot Chapter of JACL have sought to resolve that division by being a leading advocate for recognizing the historical significance of the Minidoka camp site and to ensure that the historic lessons are told to future generations.

Beginning in the 1960s, members of the chapter saw the importance of preserving the Minidoka site for its values related to civil rights and educating the public about what happened to Nikkei during World War II. Working with the Bureau of Reclamation, and others, the chapter initiated the efforts that led to the 1979 listing of the site on the National Register of Historic Places. The chapter organized the first Day of Remembrance event held in 1979 and early pilgrimages to the site. In 1990 the chapter led the effort and assisted organizationally and financially in the designation of the site as an Idaho Centennial Landmark. In 2000 and 2001, when the site was being considered for national monument designation, the chapter provided information and invaluable Idaho support for the designation and management of the site by the National Park Service.



President Reagan signs HR 442 (Civil Liberties Act) into law in White House ceremony, August 10, 1988. From left to right: Sen. Masayuki "Spark" Matsunaga (D-HI), Rep. Norman Y. Mineta (D-CA), Rep. Pat Saiki (R-HI), Sen. Pete Wilson (R-CA), Rep. Don Young (R-AK), Rep. Robert T. Matsui (D-CA), Rep. Bill Lowery (R-CA) and Harry Kajiha, President of the Japanese American Citizens League. Smithsonian Museum.

In June 1983 the Commission issued five recommendations for redress to Congress. Among the five recommendations was a proposal that each surviving victim be compensated \$20,000 as redress or reparations for the injustice.

On August 10, 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which wrote into law all five of the U.S. CWRIC's recommendations. It was not until President Bush signed the appropriation bill on November 21, 1989, that payments were set to begin on October 9, 1990. The oldest survivors received their redress checks of \$20,000 (tax-free) first, along with a letter of apology signed by President Bush. The Civil Liberties Act also established a fund for educational programs, called the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund.

Meanwhile, at Minidoka, the site became an Idaho Centennial Landmark on May 26, 1990. A ceremony dedicated the new commemorative plaques, sidewalks, and parking lot.

On January 17, 2001, President William Clinton signed Presidential Proclamation 7395 declaring 72.75 acres of the original camp the Minidoka Internment National Monument. A copy of the presidential proclamation is located in the Appendix of this document on page 211. Lands owned by the BOR and lands under public domain managed by the BLM were transferred to the NPS. Two parcels of land adjacent and within the national monument were retained by the BOR for operational use by the American Falls Reservoir Irrigation District #2.



National Register plaque in the entrance area. 2001. NPS Photo.

Throughout the process of attaining redress and continuing today, former Minidoka internees and their descendents have worked in coalition with civil rights organizations to affirm civil and Constitutional rights for all people.

Establishment of Minidoka Internment National Monument

Minidoka Internment National Monument was established on January 17, 2001, by presidential proclamation as "a unique and irreplaceable historical resource which protects historic structures and objects that provide opportunities for public education and interpretation of an important chapter in American history - the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II." The transfer of 72.75 acres from the BOR to the NPS formally established the national monument as the 385th unit of the national park system.

Minidoka WRA Center – National Register of Historic Places

In 1979, 6.06 acres of the entrance area at the former site of Minidoka WRA Center was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The listed area included the stone military police building, reception building, and remnants of the entrance garden. The features were described as "altered ruins" on their "original site," significant for "politics/government" and "social/humanitarian" as "tangible

reminders of one of the most serious and painful contradictions of our country's philosophy of freedom...Despite being less than 50-years old, this site represents an exceptional chapter in the history of the United States that should always be remembered." The national register site is within the national monument's boundaries.

Actions Affecting Minidoka Internment National Monument after Its Establishment

Bureau of Reclamation Visitor Services Area and East End Site Parcels

Upon establishment of the national monument, the BOR retained administration of two parcels of land that were part of the historic camp. The visitor services area (2.31-acres) is located in the historic warehouse area within the national monument. It contains three buildings from the historic period as well as numerous warehouse foundations. The area was used by the American Falls Reservoir Irrigation District #2 as its operational facilities for administration, maintenance, and staff housing. The east end site (7.87 acres) is considered undeveloped land. Since establishment of the national monument, the NPS and BOR entered into an agreement to move the American Falls Reservoir Irrigation District operations to a site outside the national monument's boundary. The NPS obligated \$250,000 to the BOR for relocation costs.

North Side Canal

The presidential proclamation defined the national monument's southern boundary as the North Side Canal. The proclamation stated, "The establishment of this Monument is subject to valid existing rights, provided that nothing in this proclamation shall interfere with the operation and maintenance of the Northside [sic] Canal to the extent that any such activities, that are not valid existing rights, are consistent with the purpose of the proclamation." The North Side Canal Company and the NPS have agreed on a legally surveyed boundary line, whereby the North Side Canal retains a dirt roadway along the northern edge of the canal for its operations and maintenance. The American Falls Reservoir Irrigation District No. 2 vacated the BOR site in 2005.



The North Side Canal forms the southern boundary of the national monument. 2003. NPS Photo.

Quotes from Past Presidents regarding Commemoration, Redress, and Recognition

"I call upon the American people to affirm with me this American promise — that we have learned from the tragedy of that long-ago experience forever to treasure liberty and justice for each individual American, and resolve that this kind of action shall never again be repeated."

-President Gerald R. Ford, February 19, 1976 in Proclamation 4417, titled "An American Promise," on the 34th anniversary of the issuance of Executive Order 9066.

"The Members of Congress and distinguished guests, my fellow Americans, we gather here today to right a grave wrong... The legislation that I am about to sign provides for a restitution payment to each of the 60,000 surviving Japanese-Americans of the 120,000 who were relocated or detained. Yet no payment can make up for those lost years. So, what is most important in this bill has less to do with property than with honor. For here we admit a wrong; here we reaffirm our commitment as a nation to equal justice under the law... Thank you, and God bless you. And now let me sign H.R. 442, so fittingly named in honor of the 442nd."

-President Ronald Reagan, August 10, 1988 during the signing ceremony of H.R. 442

"A monetary sum and words alone cannot restore lost years or erase painful memories; neither can they fully convey our Nation's resolve to rectify injustice and to uphold the rights of individuals. We can never fully right the wrongs of the past. But we can take a clear stand for justice and recognize that serious injustices were done to Japanese Americans during World War II. In enacting a law calling for restitution and offering a sincere apology, your fellow Americans have, in a very real sense, renewed their traditional commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice. You and your family have our best wishes for the future."

- President George H. W. Bush, October 1990 in letters that accompanied the reparations checks to survivors of the World War II internment and incarceration of Japanese Americans

"In passing the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, we acknowledge the wrongs of the past and offered redress to those who endured such grave injustice. In retrospect, we understand that the nation's actions were rooted deeply in racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a lack of political leadership. We must learn from the past and dedicate ourselves as a nation to renewing the spirit of equality and our love of freedom. Together, we can guarantee a future with liberty and justice for all."

- President William J. Clinton, October 1993 in letters that accompanied the reparations checks to survivors of the World War II internment and incarceration of Japanese Americans

CIVIL LIBERTIES ACT of 1988

*Enacted by the United States Congress
August 10, 1988*

“The Congress recognizes that, as described in the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, a grave injustice was done to both citizens and permanent residents of Japanese ancestry by the evacuation, relocation, and internment of civilians during World War II.

As the Commission documents, these actions were carried out without adequate security reasons and without any acts of espionage or sabotage documented by the Commission, and were motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.

The excluded individuals of Japanese ancestry suffered enormous damages, both material and intangible, and there were incalculable losses in education and job training, all of which resulted in significant human suffering for which appropriate compensation has not been made.

For these fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of these individuals of Japanese ancestry, the Congress apologizes on behalf of the Nation.”

Based on the findings of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC), the purposes of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 with respect to persons of Japanese ancestry included the following:

- 1) To acknowledge the fundamental injustice of the evacuation, relocation and internment of citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry during World War II;
- 2) To apologize on behalf of the people of the United States for the evacuation, internment, and relocations of such citizens and permanent residing aliens;
- 3) To provide for a public education fund to finance efforts to inform the public about the internment so as to prevent the recurrence of any similar event;
- 4) To make restitution to those individuals of Japanese ancestry who were interned;
- 5) To make more credible and sincere any declaration of concern by the United States over violations of human rights committed by other nations.”

Purpose of Minidoka Internment National Monument

The purpose of the Minidoka Internment National Monument is to provide opportunities for public education and interpretation of the internment and incarceration of Nikkei (Japanese American citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese ancestry) during World War II. The national monument protects and manages resources related to the Minidoka Relocation Center.



“Barracks and Recreational Hall.” Painting by Kenjiro Nomura. 1942-1945. Courtesy of George and Betty Nomura.

Significance of Minidoka Internment National Monument

Through public scoping and planning team workshops the significance of the national monument has been determined to be the following:

Civil and Constitutional Rights

- The national monument is a compelling venue for engaging in a dialogue concerning the violation of civil and constitutional rights, the injustice of forced removal and incarceration, the history of racism and discrimination in the United States, and the fragility of democracy in times of crisis.



Mothers of boys killed during World War II are honored on Mother's Day in Twin Falls. Circa 1944. National Archives.



Sgt. Kay (Keisaaburo) Niguma. ca. 1945. Courtesy of Rose Niguma and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

- The national monument offers a unique setting to reflect on the internment and incarceration experience and the relationship of this experience to contemporary and future political and social events.
- The national monument provides a forum for understanding how internees expressed citizenship and patriotism through individual choices. Choices reflected a range of responses, including serving valiantly in the military and draft resistance. Both choices affected families and communities, as well as the individuals who made them.

People

- Minidoka Relocation Center dramatically changed the lives of those incarcerated and had a dramatic and lasting impact on the Nikkei community.
- The establishment of the Minidoka Relocation Center during WWII had a profound effect on the social and economic fabric of neighboring southern Idaho communities.

Place

- The setting and location of Minidoka, with its isolation, openness, and distance from the Pacific Coast, are characteristic of the WRA's site selection criteria. The camp was a hastily constructed, large-scale temporary



Chikano Niguma. ca. 1945. Courtesy of Rose Niguma and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

facility that became densely populated with over 9,000 people at one time. It was typical of WRA camps constructed during World War II.

- The national monument contains unique historic and archeological resources, many of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

World War II

- The Minidoka Relocation Center represents a significant part of World War II and American history.

*Door of a
barbershop in
Parker, Arizona,
located 15 miles
from Poston
Relocation Center.
November 11, 1944.
National Archives.*



Interpretive Themes for Minidoka Internment National Monument

Primary interpretive themes are those ideas or concepts that every visitor should understand. They are the key ideas that reflect the importance of a park's nationally significant resources. Interpretive themes are developed to guide the interpretive program over the next 20 years. Therefore, they are intentionally broad to encompass a diversity of stories, facts, interpretations, and related events. The themes do not include everything the NPS may wish to interpret but rather the ideas that are critical to a visitor's understanding of a park's significance.

A long-range interpretive plan will be developed to outline the many stories that will be told at the national monument and off-site. The plan will also present how education and interpretation will be accomplished at the national monument and off-site. Many of the public's concerns about interpretation will be incorporated into this more detailed long-range interpretive plan.

The following interpretive themes for the GMP will be used to guide more detailed and specific interpretive and educational plans, materials, and activities in the future, as the national monument becomes operational.

Civil and Constitutional Rights

- The internment and incarceration of American citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese ancestry was the product of a long history of race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.
- The loyalty questionnaire designed by the U.S. government was administered only to internees and required that every internee over the age of 17 declare their loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America. Minidoka internees overwhelmingly affirmed their loyalty (97%) and helped to refute the government's assumption that the Nikkei population on the West Coast was a threat to national security.
- Nikkei contributions to national defense and draft resistance both add to an understanding of patriotism, heroism, and civil rights during World War II.



Painting by Fumio Hanaguchi, Minidoka internee. Circa 1943. National Archives.

- Minidoka provides a forum for discussing the violation of U.S. constitutional rights and the redress movement, which resulted in an apology from the United States government. It also provides an opportunity for understanding the need to protect civil rights and liberties for all Americans, regardless of gender, race, religion, or national origin.

People

- Internees at Minidoka were confronted with injustice, the loss of freedom, and profound emotional, psychological, physical, and economic hardships, and they responded in various ways with distinctive combinations of Japanese and American cultural practices, values, and perseverance.
- Minidoka is a complex mosaic that pieces together the experience of thousands of internees and their extensive social, cultural, and economic interactions with communities and organizations throughout the U.S. before, during, and after the internment and incarceration.
- Minidoka provides an opportunity for understanding how the Nikkei rebuilt their lives and communities on the West Coast and elsewhere throughout the United States after World War II.

Place

- The setting and location of Minidoka, with its isolation, openness, and distance from

the Pacific Coast, are characteristic of the War Relocation Authority's site selection criteria. The camp was a hastily constructed, large-scale temporary facility that became densely populated with over 9,000 people at one time. It was typical of War Relocation Authority camps constructed during World War II.

- Internees were forcibly removed from their homes, businesses, and communities in the lush environment of the Pacific Coast and created a community in a desert environment characterized by extreme temperatures and harsh living conditions.
- Internees transformed undeveloped arid land into irrigated agricultural fields in and around the Minidoka Relocation Center. The present-day agricultural character of the Hunt area is the legacy of internees' labor during World War II.
- Post war settlement and agricultural development of the site by World War II veterans and others is reflected in present-day land use patterns in and around the national monument.

World War II

- Minidoka Relocation Center was set within a world at war, characterized by national and personal sacrifice and hardship experienced by all Americans.



Nisei veterans assisting in the commemorative ceremony at Minidoka during the Pilgrimage. June 2004. NPS Photo.

Desired Future Conditions

Management of the national monument will strive to achieve the following desired future conditions and goals:

Resource Management

- Cultural and natural resources are preserved, protected, and maintained at the national monument for present and future generations.

Education and Interpretation

- The national monument provides the public with the opportunity to understand the profound injustice, hardship, upheaval, sacrifice, and uncertainty that were an integral part of the internment experience.

- The national monument accurately represents the personal stories, culture, values, and strength of the Nikkei, which enabled them to persevere despite the unpredictable hardships of incarceration.
- The national monument successfully depicts the internees' transformation of parts of the camp from a sterile inhospitable place into a struggling community.
- The national monument provides and facilitates quality educational, interpretive, and outreach programs, both on-site and at appropriate off-site locations.
- For the education community, the national monument is a valuable source of information and materials about the internment and incarceration experience of the Nikkei and the local community, as well as civil and constitutional rights, racism, and discrimination in the United States, and the fragility of democracy in times of crisis.
- The legacy of the national monument will be oriented toward future generations; it should focus not only on history but also interpret its relevance to current events.
- The public is aware that there exists a body of controversial thought and information that is in conflict with much of what recognized scholars agree as historically accurate in the depiction of the internment and incarceration story.

“America was founded and built up into one great republic by many patriots on the principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity. Americans of today have responsibilities to uphold that principle for which their forefathers had lived and fought and died. Many Americans are fighting overseas to uphold those principles. It is up to those staying behind not to break down what had been built up through the glorious pages of American history and what their sons, brothers, husbands, fathers are overseas defending with their lives. It is a necessity, therefore, for our government to remind her people of these eternal truths of America.”

- Tom Takeuchi, editor of the Minidoka Interlude and Minidoka internee, 1943

Visitor Use and Facilities

- The national monument can be located easily by the traveling public.
- The national monument provides a compelling interpretive and educational experience that attracts public visitation.
- The national monument provides a variety of educational experiences for visitors of all ages and backgrounds.
- The national monument offers opportunities for individuals to contemplate and reflect upon the internment experience and civil and constitutional rights in the United States.
- The national monument provides research opportunities for the public to locate relatives and friends who were incarcerated at Minidoka.
- Facilities at the national monument should be appropriate for the site, and not intrude on or negatively impact the existing historic resources of the camp.

Operations and Management

- The national monument provides sufficient administrative, interpretive, curatorial, and maintenance space to serve programs and operations.

Boundary and Adjacent Land

- The physical configuration of the national monument provides adequate capabilities for operations, public access, visitor facilities, interpretation, and protection of significant cultural and natural resources.
- The vastness, isolation, and open character of the site's desert environment that existed during the historic period are maintained through collaborative partnerships and cooperative efforts with surrounding land owners and others.

Partnerships and Outreach

- Diverse partnership opportunities are actively pursued and developed in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the national monument.



*Idaho Centennial
Project dedication
on May 26, 1990.
Photo courtesy of
the Twin Falls
Times News.*

